

t was the stated intention of the movie's director, Oliver Hirschbiegel, to humanize Hitler and the others in the bunker with him, including his vapid mistress, Eva Braun. "What I hope I've done is complete the picture of what happened -- to make these characters whole in the mind of my generation, so we can really see them as human beings -- granted, horrendous, evil, ignorant and empty -- but still human, because we can't learn from monsters," he said in one recent interview.

And so we learn that Hitler really was good to his dog, Blondi, and kind to his secretaries, and solicitous toward the little Goebbels kids, all of whom were murdered in their sleep by their mother, Magda, so they would be spared life without Nazism. Later she and her husband, the propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels, concluded their own suicide pact. This is not cinema. This is history. No, it is both.